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The Panton, Leslie Papers: Letters of and to John Forbes

John Forbes



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THE PANTON, LESLIE PAPERS

LETTERS OF AND TO JOHN FORBES

Nassau 12th January 1814

My Dear Sirs

On the 10th instant your letters by Pau came to hand ; their inclosures will be forwarded by the fleet which sails after the 18th by which time I expect Pau will be ready to return, & by him I shall write you more particularly than I can by the present circuitous route. This man's Vessel was condemned before he reached Nassau, on the principle of Blockade, but the Judge is said to have been to precipitate, and Mr. Armstrong has recommended an Appeal; we are unable here to speak positively as to the operation of Sir John B- Warren's proclamation as it solely embraces all the outlets of the Mississippi.

There is little doubt but our friends will exert themselves in procuring a serious reversal of the measure, and if successful there will be an ample field for you opened and in the meantime you must only be cautious in not committing yourselves or the property under your charge to the chances of War.

I never thought of claiming from the Spanish Government a document to prove what the constitution itself has declared to be a fundamental Law of the Nation. If necessary I can procure it hereafter but in order to obviate any doubts on the occasion at present I will send you thro' Mitchel a certified copy

Note.-These letters are in continuation of the series of records of Panton, Leslie & Co., and its successor John Forbes & Co., the publication of which has been continuous in the *Quarterly*. These are in the possession of Mrs. John W. Greenslade, a descendant of John Innerarity, the last surviving partner of the latter firm. She has transcribed them.

A new series of these records will begin in an early number of the *Quarterly*.

of General Pinkneys' letter to Governor Kindelan in which I am recognized by him as a Spanish subject. My residence in the Spanish Dominions for upwards of Twenty years of itself confers that character upon me, nor can my casual residence in Nassau affect my real Estate in the Floridas, however it may render my property found afloat, during that residence, liable to be made prize.

In claiming these Lands in our own name I think you are perfectly right. I detest covers of every kind and never yet made use of them but I had reason to be dissatisfied with myself afterwards.

You will be pleased to attend particularly to what I have written Mr. Craik on the subject of the Appalachicola Lands; in your next letter I wish you to say something to him on the probability of all the family being inclined to give up their interest in them for a specific Sum-Mr. Gordon has hinted that it is but right you should be remunerated out of them for your trouble, but he must speak plainer before I understand the general expressions which I have often found to mean anything.

I think your apprehensions. about the Americans totally groundless. Destitute as Madison & Co. are of principle, they will not at this moment think of embroiling themselves with Spain who now can look forward to the liberation of her Provinces, and will not submit as heretofore; the late events on the Continent of Europe will naturally encourage the one & depress the other. I almost look for the preliminaries of peace being at this moment signed in the Old World.

You need not look for the Drania, as I am informed, but shall be more particular in my next.

I remain very Truly yours

JOHN FORBES

[Superscription lacking. To John Forbes & Co. Pensacola or to James and John Innerarity]

Nassau 7th January 1814

My dear James :

I wrote the House and you by Andres Fernandez who came here to claim a Vessel of Martiattus. In my letter to you of the 1st October I omitted mentioning your Grandfather's legacy of 1000 which must be remitted separate & distinctly in conformity with the annexed abstract of Accounts which have been transmitted to Mr. Craik.

Copy of my letter to that gentleman is put up under this cover, by which you will see that you stand fairly committed to them for any delay that may occur in the business. I am determined to throw the load off my shoulders, as I think my exertions have exceeded anything that the parties could reasonably expect. I have settled as far as the a/c are made up with my Nephew & Niece each of whom share about nine thousand pounds. I have settled Archibald Leslie's bequest and his Brother Alexander's in full.

William Leslie's & Margaret Gordons children partially, the latter not fully on account of some scruples of Mr. Gordon's respecting the Accounts, which I hope his good sense will get over. I should be sorry that he above all men should take up my accounts as that of a common administrator. My House Expenses here, & clerks, etc. exceed my commissions as Executor.

I cannot express my disappointment at your inability to meet me by the last voyage of the Drania. In my present situation your advice would have been of the utmost importance, & your presence a consolation to my harassed mind.

I should be in England now for our own sakes.

The President's speech offers no Prospect of Peace, and the measure of an Embargo, which we

hear is on the topic will render your situation horrid indeed-I remain

My Dear Sir

Your obedt. hble. servt.

JOHN FORBES

[James Innerarity, Mobile?]

* * *

Chickasaw-Hay
August 13th 1803

Sir :

I received your letter of 20 June on the Path near Pearl River, and (retarded by ill health) did not reach this place until yesterday.

I have conversed with Mr. Simpson and am doing whatever may with consistency and Propriety be done to reconcile your Interests to those of the United States, and should I succeed, the result is the only reward I desire; indeed the consciousness of having done a good deed, is in my estimation the richest of all rewards.

I shall press forward to the Creeks, and will be near Marshalls about the 15th Proximo, where I shall be happy to meet you if convenient, as I propose to return by Pensacola, should no impediment occur.

I hope my Associates may succeed with the Creeks, but I doubt it, as the Confederacy or compact formed at the Hickory Ground, is replete with mischievous tendencies, is unwise even as respects the four Nations, and should have been discountenanced-for the very first commotion between these Nations and the Whites, will seal the destruction of the former and overturn the beneficent plans we are pursuing.

The circumscription of the Indian Hunting Grounds will promote the progress of the Civil Arts among them on which their existence as a people

absolutely depends; and this pact is opposed to any sale. These sentiments are uninteresting to you and I have inadvertantly committed them.

I therefore Beseech you to treat them with reserve as I apprehend they clash with those of my friend Hawkins, and I reluctantly give pain to any one.

The present is certainly a most critical moment to you, and I should be diligently and judiciously employed here and at the Seat of the Government of the United States-where I have reason to believe you are misrepresented, and where it becomes indispensable for you to make your arrangements, with views to a permanent Commercial Intercourse with the Indians, within our limits.

With respectful consideration

I am Sir

Your obdt Servt

J. A. [?] WILKINSON

John Forbes Esqr.

